DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 843 CG 026 026

AUTHOR Benshoff, James M.
TITLE Helping Ourselves: Ethical Practice through Peer Supervision.
PUB DATE 4 Apr 90
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American College Personnel Association (St. Louis, MO, April 1-4, 1990).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Counseling Techniques; *Counselors; *Ethics; Higher Education; Models; *Peer Counseling; *Peer Relationship; Student Development; *Student Personnel Workers; *Supervision

ABSTRACT

Supervision provides student development professionals with an important forum for examining and discussing ethical issues which arise in practice. However, high-quality counseling supervision may not always be available to practitioners when they need it most. Peer supervision is a method of counseling supervision which can be a viable alternative to traditional methods of supervision. Through peer supervision, student development professionals can work together to share a supervision arrangement with one or two of their colleagues without benefit of an "expert" supervisor. Regular peer supervision sessions can provide participants with important opportunities to obtain critical feedback on their work and to apply ethical standards to the realities of professional practice. This paper discusses the implications of supervision for ethical practice, the function of supervision, and the rationale for peer supervision. Models of peer supervision are presented, including the Triadic Peer Supervision Model and the Structured Peer Supervision Model. Potential benefits of peer supervision to student development professionals are listed. It is concluded that, through peer supervision experiences, student affairs practitioners can assist one another to identify, confront, and resolve ethical issues and conflicts on college and university campuses. (Author/NB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 363 843

Title

Helping Ourselves: Ethical Practice through Peer Supervision

Paper presented at the 1990 Convention of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), St. Louis, MO, April 4, 1990.

Author

James M. Benshoff, Ph.D., NCC

Abstract

Supervision provides student development professionals with an important forum for examining and discussing ethical issues which arise in practice. However, high-quality counseling supervision may not always be available to practitioners when they need it most. Peer supervision is a method of counseling supervision which can be a viable alternative to traditional methods of supervision. Through peer supervision, student development professionals can work together to share a supervision arrangement with one or two of their colleagues without benefit of an "expert" supervisor. Regular peer supervision sessions can provide participants with important opportunities to obtain critical feedback on their work and to apply ethical standards to the realities of professional practice. This paper discusses the implications of supervision for ethical practice, the function of supervision, rationale for peer supervision, and models of peer supervision.

Author Information

James M. Benshoff is an assistant professor in the Counselor Education Program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. For further information about the Structured Peer Supervision Model, he may be contacted at:

Counselor Education Program
School of Education
228 Curry Building
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, NC 27412
Phone: (919)334-5100

CG026026

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J Benshoff

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HELPING OURSELVES:

ETHICAL PRACTICE THROUGH PEER SUPERVISION

Ethical standards for student development professionals

In July 1989, the Executive Council of the Association for College Student Personnel approved a revised "Statement of Ethical Principles and Standards" for the Association. A brochure containing the complete statement was developed and disseminated to every ACPA member, along with a letter from President Robert D. Brown. Brown opened this letter by stating that "no document or professional statement is more important that the one that puts forth ethical principles of a group of professionals" (Brown, letter, September 1989). In addition, the theme of the 1990 ACPA Convention is "Creating an Ethical Climate on Campus". This theme was also reflected at several state branch conventions, including North Carolina College Personnel Association in Fall 1989. Clearly, the publication of revised ethical standards for the association has provided an opportunity for student development professionals to reexamine practices and policies on their campuses.

Corey, Corey, & Callanan (1988) note that "ethical guidelines offered by most professional organizations are general and usually represent minimal standards of conduct" (p. 5). They emphasize the need for counselors to develop both their own ethical awareness and their abilities to utilize problem-solving skills to "interpret and translate general guidelines into . . . professional day-to-day behavior" (p. 5). Even the best, clearest, most well-written ethical guidelines cannot always be easily applied to the complexities of the problems student affairs professionals face in their work within college

and university settings. The ethical decision making expected of student affairs professionals requires the individual practitioner to be guided by ethical standards and principles in making careful and considered judgments about specific situations. Frequently, assessing a complex situation and deciding upon an ethically responsible course of action requires the individual practitioner to seek objective feedback, information, and evaluation by other professionals, such as colleagues or supervisors. Moreover, consulting with other qualified professionals and obtaining a consensus on how to proceed in a given situation can provide the practioner with a more defensible position should any legal action result.

Ethics and supervision

The ACPA Ethical Standards (1989) contain three standards which relate to the need for student development professionals to engage in ongoing supervision and consultation experiences. These standards state that "As ACPA members, student affairs professionals will:

1.4 Monitor their personal and professional functioning and effectiveness and seek assistance from appropriate professionals as needed (p. 5).

2.9 Confront students regarding issues, attitudes, and behaviors that have ethical implications (p. 8).

3.6 Inform supervisors of conditions or practices that may restrict institutional or professional effectiveness (p. 9).

The first of these, Standard 1.4, is clearly the standard which is most relevant (and all-encompassing) for any discussion of counseling supervision in colleges and universities. The publication of revised ACPA ethical standards calls attention to the importance of ethical issues and ethical decision making in the daily practice and administration of student affairs. When confronted

with difficult and complex ethical dilemmas, the first step for practitioners should be to consult with a supervisor or with colleagues. In settings where formal counseling supervision is limited or nonexistent, student development professionals may need to turn to colleagues for assistance in determining the most ethical solutions. However, this can be difficult where trusting and effective consultative relationships do not already exist. Just as times of crisis are not the optimal times to develop institutional policies and procedures, so it is that confrontation with ethical questions which require rapid resolution is not conducive to creating useful consultative relationships. Developing peer supervision relationships with colleagues provides an excellent framework for getting feedback, consultation, and information from trusted practitioners who are already familiar with the practitioner's knowledge, skills, and style of working with students. Colleagues who have been working together already to assist one another to maintain and improve professional skills can serve as critical resources when one is struggling to unravel complex situations and determine ethical courses of action. Working together as part of a peer supervision arrangement may also provide the support and encouragement necessary to learn and grow from these experiences. Like the students we serve, we must confront and resolve challenging and difficult issues, in a environment that provides us with sufficient security and support, in order to grow and develop as professionals.

Standard 2.9 states that "As ACPA members, student affairs professionals will confront students regarding issues, attitudes, and behaviors that have ethical implications" (p. 8). This adds another layer of ethical responsibility for student development practitioners and includes the role of "ethical educator" on college campuses. As members of the university communities, then, practitioners have a responsibility to increase the

awareness of students about ethical issues in daily life and to assist them in acquiring and using ethical decision making skills. Peer supervision arrangements can provide an important forum for practitioners to review specific issues, attitudes, and behaviors of students and discuss courses of action to ensure that ethical considerations are recognized and addressed.

Standard 3.6 describes the responsiblity of student affairs professionals for increasing the awareness of supervisors (presumably administrators) regarding ethical practices and policies on campus. Identifying and raising such issues can be both difficult and anxiety-producing for practitioners. Here again, peer supervision offers opportunities for discussing, brainstorming, evaluating, and planning with trusted colleagues. The support and feedback that colleagues can provide may make it easier for student development professionals to fulfill this ethical responsibility for challenging policies and practices on campus.

Role of counseling supervision

For many years, counseling supervision was viewed as merely an extension of the various theoretical models for the helping relationship (Leddick & Bernard, 1980). In recent years, however, supervision has begun to be viewed as a process which, while closely related to counseling, has its own distinct characteristics, stages, procedures, and skills.

Ryan (1978) has identified six major goals for counselor supervision (both pre- and in-service). The counselor supervisor addresses these supervision goals with supervisees through five primary functions (Ryan, 1978): assistance, teaching, inspection, direction, and evaluation. These goals for the supervision process are:

1. Supervision should contribute to the personal growth and professional development of the trainees or counselors.
2. Supervision should assist the trainees or counselors to enhance their capabilities for developing and implementing a helping relationship with clients.
3. Supervision should result in the trainees' or counselors' development of cognitive learning outcomes.
4. Supervision should result in helping the trainees or counselors to integrate personal growth and professional development with cognitive learning.
5. Supervision should result in helping the trainees or counselors to understand the dynamics of their own behavior in relation to the effect of their behavior on others.
6. Supervision should result in helping the trainees or counselors to integrate skills of counseling and consultation into their behavior repertoires (p. 8).

In discussing supervision of counselors, it is important to distinguish between administrative supervision and counseling supervision. Administrative supervision may be defined as a management function that does not focus on the counseling process (Remley, Benshoff, & Mowbray, 1987), and which may include such tasks as hiring, evaluation, monitoring, and termination of employee-counselors. Counseling supervision may be understood as the means through which information, feedback, and support related to counseling skills and client issues are provided to counselors (Yager & Littrell, 1978). Thus, the administrative supervisor assumes responsibilities related to management of

the counselor as an employee, while the counseling supervisor assumes responsibilities related to the counselor's effectiveness with clients.

It is a rare counselor who does not receive supervision of the administrative variety. In work settings, the distinction between administrative and counseling supervisors is frequently not made. Thus, where counseling supervision is offered, the administrative supervisor is expected to provide it. In addition to issues related to appropriate training and educational background of administrative supervisors for providing counseling supervision, there is the critically important issue of evaluation which must be addressed. Like the counseling relationship, the relationship between supervisor and supervisee must be built on trust and mutual respect that provides the basis for the supervisee to examine his or her strengths, weaknesses, and professional development needs in a safe and nonevaluative environment. Evaluation, however, is a critical and necessary part of the administrative supervisor's role and function. Can the supervisor who has the power and the responsibility for evaluating your effectiveness as an employee also be effective in assisting you to examine, evaluate and improve your counseling effectiveness? Johnston and Gysbers (1967) have suggested separating off the evaluative function and assigning responsibility for certifying counselor competency to a third party, thus reducing the "threat" of the supervisor relationship. This issue is most recently addressed in the draft Ethical Standards for Counseling Supervisors (ACES, 1990) which states that:

> Supervisors who have multiple roles with supervisees should minimize potential conflict by clarifying each role to the supervisee and *where possible dividing these roles among several supervisors* (italics added) (p. 13).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

It is not uncommon, then, for counselors to find themselves practicing in situations where counseling supervision of their work with clients is infrequent, insufficient, or even unavailable (Barrett & Schmidt, 1986). This lack of counseling supervision can be due to a variety of "real-life" factors, among them:

- o the unavailability of a qualified counseling supervisor in the work setting
- o the lack of interest, time, or availability of a qualified supervisor in the work setting
- o the counselor's lack of interest and/or time for feedback and evaluation of counseling practice
- o incompatitibilty between the counselor and the designated counseling supervisor (e.g., differences in personality, theoretical approach to working with clients, expectations for the supervision process, etc.).

In counselor education programs, counseling supervision is considered to be of such critical importance that the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the accrediting body for counselor education programs, require that accredited programs provide trainees with both supervised practica and internship experiences to promote maximum professional development (CACREP, 1987). Moreover, the supervised experiential component of counselor education programs, which now comprises from 15%-30% of total counselor education program at the master's level, is expected to continue to increase (Hollis & Wantz, 1986).

But what happens to counselors when they leave these counselor education programs and venture out into the field as professional counselors? Do 48 semester hours of coursework and a few hundred hours of supervised field

experiences (in CACREP-approved programs) adequately prepare counselors for the myriad personal and professional dilemmas they can expect to face during their counseling careers? Who do practicing counselors turn to when they need assistance, advice, and professional consultation?

Ideally, every counselor in every work setting would be able to engage in a regular, ongoing relationship with a counseling supervisor who had extensive experience both as a counselor and as a supervisor of counselors and who had specialized training in counseling supervision. As discussed previously, this situation frequently does not exist in real-life work settings. In addition, few counseling supervisors have had any formal preparation for their role of supervising the counseling of others; typically, their knowledge of the supervision process is based on their own experiences as supervisees. Few counselor education programs offer any training in supervision for counselors at the master's (practitioner's) level, and even the majority of doctoral programs do not include supervision coursework. This is an area of considerable concern for many supervisors and is currently being addressed by the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision through:

- the proposed Ethical Standards for Counseling Supervisors (ACES, 1990) which states that: "Supervisors should have had training in supervision prior to initiating their role as supervisors" (p. 13);
- the Standards for Counseling Supervisors (adopted by the AACD Governing Council in July 1989); and,
- the development of a Curriculum Guide for Supervisor Training (ACES, 1989).

The Peer Supervision Alternative

A review of counselor supervision literature reveals a need for counselors to learn how to establish and maintain effective supervisory experiences for

themselves. Most counselors agree that an effective method of improving counseling skills is to evaluate their practice on a regular basis (Remley et al., 1987). Further, since it has been suggested that the skill level of counselors decreases after training terminates (Meyer, 1978; Spooner and Stone, 1977), it appears that counselors may need continuing clinical supervision in order to maintain skills.

Peer supervision provides a means for counselors to use their helping skills to assist one another in becoming more effective and skillful counselors (Wagner & Smith, 1979). A peer supervision relationship can provide counselors with the opportunity to work through the variety of difficulties encountered in helping others as well as to identify and address their own personal issues which interfere with professional growth and development. Sharing a peer supervision relationship with a colleague may be a viable alternative to receiving clinical supervision from an administrator, instructor, or consultant. In a review of practicum research literature, Hansen et al. (1982) found "tentative support for peer supervision . . . [which] may be a fruitful area for further research and may yield beneficial findings that can be applied in training programs" (p. 22).

One potential problem with peer supervision is that counselors may view the peer supervisor as someone who has little more experience than they and who is therefore unqualified to teach them new skills and approaches to counseling clients (Davis & Arvey, 1978). Although some counselors might be skeptical of the quality of the peer supervision experience, Worthington (1984) found no evidence that supervision provided by experienced supervisors is better than supervision provided by those less experienced. Leddick and Borders (1987) maintain that "you can still be an effective supervisor regardless of the relative counseling competency of you and your supervisee. A supervisor is one

who usually has a different perspective on counseling than the supervisee . . . and can remain more objective because he or she does not have to respond directly to the client's interpersonal pulls . . ." (p. 2). Moreover, as counselors develop their skills, they increasingly show a preference for peer supervision (Hansen et al., 1982; Stoltenberg, 1981).

A significant advantage of a peer supervision arrangement is that both counselors can benefit from clinical supervision simultaneously (Remley et al., 1987). Wagner and Smith (1979) note that "peer supervision would require [counselors] to design collaborative working relationships and to use these relationships for their own development" (p. 289). In addition, each can begin to develop supervisory skills that are not often taught in master's level programs (Hess, 1980; Seligman, 1978). While adequate supervision is not always available from qualified supervisors, counselors usually can informally discuss counseling approaches, therapeutic techniques, and problem cases with colleagues. In peer supervision, counselors can choose from among their colleagues peer supervisors with whom they share mutual respect, compatibility, and a genuine interest in helping one another develop professional skills This element of choice is often not possible in more traditional supervisory situations.

Because peer supervision deemphasizes the evaluative function that is a necessary part of other approaches to counselor supervision, counselors may be more open to sharing their concerns, frustrations, and disappointments with a trusted colleague who can provide alternative perspectives and fresh, practical ideas. As colleagues who may have similar or varying levels of training and experience, peer supervisors may work together as equals without the constraints of an expert-novice relationship and without fear of being graded. This freedom from being evaluated may have the potential to facilitate

supervisees' ability to more closely and critically examine their own counseling behaviors and take steps to implement desired changes.

Peer supervision might also serve a preventive function in helping practicing counselors to cope with the occupational stresses that frequently lead to "burnout." Spicuzza and DeVoe (1982) have stressed the importance of mutual aid groups in helping to prevent burnout among helping professionals. Structured peer supervision can provide a format for counselors to offer support, encouragement, and reinforcement for one another as they struggle to provide effective services to clients in often-difficult and frustrating circumstances.

From a developmental viewpoint, the nature of the supervisory relationship and process changes as the supervisee gains in expertise and experience. While beginning supervisees tend to emphasize the mechanics and specific tasks of the supervision process, more experienced supervisees view supervision more in terms of intensive and supportive relationships with their supervisors (Cross & Brown, 1983). In Stoltenberg's (1981) developmental model of counseling supervision, as supervisees gain experience, supervision becomes more of a collegial relationship in which both members share, provide support, and learn from one another (Stoltenberg, 1981; Hogan, 1964). Littrell et al. (1979) have also proposed a developmental framework for counseling supervision in which the two highest levels involve collegial/consultative supervision relationships and self-supervision. At these levels, the supervisee assumes greater responsibility for areas of difficulty and for self-evaluation. Peer supervision opportunities and experiences may then be seen as a necessary and integral part of the ongoing professional growth and development of counselors. Models such as the Structured Peer Supervision Model (Benshoff, 1989) or the triadic peer supervision model (Spice & Spice, 1976) can provide

counselors who have reached this highest developmental stage with a framework for developing meaningful and supportive supervision relationships with compatible colleagues.

Goals of Peer Supervision

Wagner and Smith (1979) have conceptualized goals for peer supervision in terms of students' development as both peers and as supervisors. Primary goals related to students' development as counselors include:

- improving basic counseling skills;
- developing more advanced counseling skills, such as goal-setting, overcoming client resistances and blocks, and increasing their repertoire of counseling strategies and interventions;
- increasing students' understanding of their role and functions as counselors (identifying strengths and areas for improvement, developing personal style, etc.).

Peer supervision goals which relate more directly to supervision issues focus on students' development as supervisees and their ability to provide supervision and feedback to their peers. These goals include:

- increased ability to solicit and utilize assistance from peers and authorities as necessary;
- developing skills to assist peers and others in dealing with their own professional or personal issues;
- improving the counselor's ability to recognize and process relationship issues that may interfere with effectiveness in supervision or in working with clients;

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- increasing the willingness of counselor trainees to seek therapy for themselves as needed to deal with personal issues that might interfere with their counseling ability.

PEER SUPERVISION MODELS

Nontraditional models of counseling supervision

Several non-traditional models for counselor supervision have been suggested in the literature. Davis and Arvey (1978) proposed a model for dual-supervision in which each practicum student was assigned both a faculty supervisor and a doctoral student supervisor who met independently with the supervisee. The exposure to different supervisory styles that students received through this model was unanimously rated by students as contributing significantly to their professional development as counselors. McBride and Martin (1986) have proposed a dual-supervision model in which supervision of practicum students is provided jointly by two counseling faculty members. In this model, one major goal was for counselor trainees to move in the direction of self-supervision, necessitating that students learn self-monitoring and self-critiquing skills. The authors also emphasize the supervision process as a mutual learning experience which "provides for the growth of counselor trainees, clients, and supervisors" (p. 177).

Self-supervision has also been proposed as a possible method of monitoring one's own work (Meyer, 1978; Yager & Park, 1986). Yager and Park (1986) have noted that "although formal supervision is most often thought of in the context of a more experienced 'supervisor' working with a less experienced 'supervisee', it is clear . . . that this need not necessarily be the case" (pp. 6-7). The authors, in fact, agree with Meyer (1978) in citing the need for counselors to learn methods for self-supervision in order to continue their personal and professional growth and development of effective counseling

skills. Counselors, however, seem to benefit greatly from consultation and feedback from other counseling professionals and can find it difficult to objectively evaluate their own professional development. Moreover, Seligman (1978) suggests that peer supervision may be more effective than traditional supervision for some counselors who are more comfortable sharing questions and concerns with peers than with more "expert" supervisors. Therefore, it can be advantageous to enlist the support and feedback of competent and trusted colleagues in the on-going process of self-evaluation. As part of their self-supervision model, Yager and Park (1986) encourage counselors to meet and share difficulties with their colleagues in other settings and to obtain formal or informal feedback and evaluation on counseling session tapes from other counselors in or outside of their work setting.

Wagner and Smith (1979) also have identified a need to teach counselors how to recognize and use peers as resources for their own personal and professional development. In their peer supervision model, peer supervisors were expected to develop greater interdependence on their peers and to use "all of their resources to assist peer supervisees with their concerns" (p. 289). Peer supervision sessions were observed by experienced supervisors who could use a type of "bug in the ear" to speak to the peer supervisor in-session and who spent time processing and discussing the experience following the session. Wagner and Smith reported numerous benefits of this experience, including:

- greater self-confidence;
- increased ability to sytematically implement purposeful counseling interventions;
- increased self-direction;
- greater, more effective use of modeling as a teaching and learning technique; and

- improved ability to establish and prioritize clear goals for supervision.

Students also seemed to develop a greater sense of supervision as a mutual, cooperative process in which they were active participants. They became more willing and able to initiate requests for help and assumed greater responsibility for their own learning. Counselor trainees also showed a higher incidence of risk-taking behaviors and were more willing and better able to provide constructive criticism to their peers.

Wagner and Smith (1979) observed that students seemed to "attend and listen more carefully when peers present their concerns" and suggest that "this may result from a closer identification with the helpee" (p. 291). As a result of the peer supervision experience, students seemed to develop a greater dependence on one another for support and assistance. Moreover, the authors found that graduates from the program were more likely to develop a colleague network for continuing professional development following graduation.

Models of Peer Supervision

Runkel and Hackney (1982) reviewed and discussed a model for peer supervision of pastoral counselors using consultation teams (Houts, 1980). Houts developed the concept of using consultation teams to provide supervision for pastoral counselors who were unable to find or receive regular clinical supervision. Goals for the consultation teams were to provide many of the elements of traditional supervision (feedback, critique, evaluation, instruction) as well as to offer high levels of personal and professional support. Participating pastoral counselors selected their own partners to work with in the two- or three-person consulation teams and committed to working together for a minimum of 11 weeks. One advantage of this approach to forming the consultation teams was that teams were based on intentional relationships

(peers choosing to work with one another) in contrast to traditional supervision which generally does not offer supervisees the opportunity to select their preferred supervisor. In addition, Runkel and Hackney (1980) note that "a peer can help in dealing with conflicts in unique ways that the superior [expert supervisor] cannot" (p. 114).

Prior to beginning the model, Houts provided consultation teams with a two-day training session which focused on the following areas:

- developing trust and establishing rapport among team members;
- learning and practicing a variety of feedback skills;
- goal-setting, contracting, and identifying appropriate evaluation strategies.

At the end of each month, consultation teams met together as a group to provide support for one another, share experiences, and problem-solve. Participants reported greater feelings of professional competency and increased independence and autonomy. The authors conclude that peer supervision may provide a viable and effective alternative means for practicing counselors to receive supervision.

In a discussion of instructional supervision in practicum, Hiebert et al. (1981) noted that their supervision model could provide a framework for peers to supervise one another or even for self-critiquing of counseling skills by an individual counselor. They maintained that peer and self-analysis methods of supervision could be encouraged and developed within counselor education programs by providing trainees with a structured format for the supervision process. In addition to enhancing supervision in the practicum, the authors maintain that such experiences can also provide counselors with effective supervision options that they can implement in the field as practicing counselors.

Buchheimer (1966, 1964) has described four different approaches to counselor supervision:

- The procedural approach emphasizes specific administrative aspects and counseling techniques;
- The didactic approach focuses on theoretical aspects of the helping relationship;
- The demonstrational approach analyzes the interpersonal dynamics of the counseling relationship, and
- The self-exploratory approach uses the counselor trainee as an instrument in the helping relationship.

This conceptualization of the functions of supervision formed the basis for a model for the use of peer supervision groups in counselor supervision (Fraleigh & Buchheimer, 1969). In these groups, the faculty supervisor serves as the group leader who provides structure and support for the sessions. While the supervisor leads the group, peers help supervise one another in the group by offering different suggestions, different theoretical orientations, and a different perspective on particular counseling situations. Student counselors are able to use each other as role models and be exposed to a variety of different approaches and solutions to counseling problems and issues. Perhaps the most important benefit of this peer model is that it encourages students to develop their own individual counseling styles and decreases dependence on the designated supervisor (Fraleigh & Buchheimer, 1969). Although the authors question the extent to which peer groups can assist in the self-exploratory component of supervision, they note that trainees can at the very least offer support and encouragement for their peers to look at their own issues and dynamics related to the counseling process. Allowing peer supervision groups to work on their own encourages "the acceptance of full responsibility for the

assessment of one's self and one's peers" (p. 287), thereby increasing skills and independence of the peer supervisors (Fraleigh & Buchheimer, 1969). The authors suggsest that peer supervision can facilitate individual growth and development of the practitioners and help to meet individual needs.

In a somewhat different approach, Reynolds and McWhirter (1984) have examined the cotherapy model for counseling and discovered that it can offer the following important peer supervision benefits for the participating cotherapists:

(1) Peers are able to provide objectivity and perceive alternatives that the counselor may lack.

(2) The peer relationship may allow for increased support and thereby decrease supervision anxiety which interferes with learning.

(3) Peer supervision increases accountability and may foster a greater sense of shared responsibility for the counseling process. The authors note that "a willingness to work with a partner implies a willingness to expose one's professional style to scrutiny" (p. 208).

(4) It provides additional opportunities for supervision (supplements traditional supervision) and may help supervisees to clarify issues before meeting with other supervisors.

(5) Peer supervision provides participants with opportunities to learn and practice supervisory skills for themselves.

The Triadic Peer Supervision Model (Spice & Spice, 1976)

Spice and Spice (1976) have argued that, to improve the supervision process, "a greater emphasis on peer supervision is needed" (p. 252) and that supervision must be such as to be easily adapted to the wide variety of settings in which counselors practice. Toward meeting these needs, the authors

have proposed a triadic method of supervision. In this model, counselors work together in triads, rotating the roles of commentator, supervisee, and facilitator through successive sessions. While a counseling supervisor is initially involved in helping trainees learn the different roles, the triad is intended to function independently of traditional supervision. The supervisee for each session presents a sample of his or her counseling practice through an audio- or videotape or a case presentation. The commentator critiques and provides feedback about the counseling sample, while the facilitator helps supervisee and commentator focus in on the "here-and-now" of the supervision process.

Spice and Spice (1976) describe three elements important to the process of constructive critical commentary. Commentators should focus first on the positive aspects of the student counselor's performance in the counseling sample. Having begun with the positive, the commentator then can move onto suggestions for improving counselor effectiveness. The authors emphasize that the goals of the supervisee should provide the direction for the commentary. They note that "focusing both on things done well and on possibilities for improvement allows each of these to illuminate, rather than overwhelm, the other" (p. 255). Finally, the mutuality of the process and the relationship between supervisee and commentator is strongly emphasized, both grow from the relationship and learn from each other. The facilitator's role is to increase supervisee and commentator understanding of the interpersonal dynamics in the "here-and-now" of the supervision session and to clarify communication between them. As trainees perform in the three different roles, they acquire skills, practice, and understanding necessary to eventually be able to incorporate and integrate all three into their counseling and supervisory styles. The authors conclude that this model is one which is versatile and adaptable not only for

counselor training, but also for supervisor training and for the supervision of practicing counselors.

The Structured Peer Supervision Model (Benshoff, 1989)

Remley et. al. (1987) have proposed a peer supervision model designed to be used by practicing counselors and other human development professionals. In this model, peers work together in dyads for 10 (or more) sessions to discuss counseling philosophies and theoretical orientations, critique recent journal articles, conduct case presentations, and review counseling session tapes. Benshoff (1989) adapted this 10 session model and developed the Structured Peer Supervision Model, a seven-session model to provide additional supervision experiences in counselor education programs. A brief description of each one-hour session of this seven-session model follows.

Session 1: Background information and goal setting. Peer supervisors begin by explaining and discussing their approaches to working with clients in counseling, including relevant educational or work experiences, theoretical orientations, and counseling styles. In the initial stages of peer supervision peer supervisors also discuss and clarify individual goals for the next six sessions. Prior to the next session, each counselor agrees to read one independently-chosen journal article on a relevant topic of mutual interest (counseling or supervision issues). During the next week, each student also tapes one client session and brings the tape to Session 2 to exchange with the peer supervisor.

Session 2: Discussion of readings. Counselors share information and discuss reactions to and thoughts about the journal articles read. During any remaining time, counselors may briefly present problem cases for discussion or discuss other counseling experiences. Peer supervisors exchange tapes of client sessions to be critically reviewed prior to Session 3.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Session 3: Tape reviews. During the first half hour of the session, one counselor assumes the role of supervisor with the other counselor taking the role of supervisee. In the second half of the session, they switch roles so that each has an opportunity to receive feedback on his/her taped counseling session.

Session 4: Oral case study presentations. Each counselor presents a brief case study, one with which the counselor is having some difficulty. During the first half of the session, one counselor presents a case study for critique and discussion by the peer supervisor. In the second half, they switch roles, and the peer supervisor presents a case study. Peer supervisors exchange audiotapes for review prior to Session 5.

Session 5: Tape reviews. Each counselor has an opportunity to be both supervisor and supervisee in reviewing audiotapes of each other's counseling sessions (same activities as Session 3).

Session 6: Oral case study presentations. Each counselor presents a brief case study for discussion (same activities as Session 4).

Session 7: Evaluation and termination. During the first half of this session, peer supervisors evaluate the supervision arrangement and their own progress in achieving individual goals during the previous six sessions of peer supervision.

Peer supervision and ethical practice on campus

Peer supervision offers a number of potential benefits for student development practitioners (Fraleigh & Buchheimer, 1969; Friesen & Dunning, 1973; Holloway & Hosford, 1983; Seligman, 1978; Wagner & Smith, 1979), including:

- decreased dependency on administrative and other "expert" supervisors;

- greater responsibility of practitioners for assessing and improving their own skills and those of their peers;
- providing practitioners with necessary skills and experiences to structure their own professional growth;
- increased self-confidence, self-direction, and independence;
- greater interdependence on colleagues; and,
- opportunity to learn and practice supervision skills.

Additional benefits of a peer supervision model for student affairs professionals include (Runkel & Hackney, 1982):

- increasing the options and assistance available to practitioners,
- encouraging self-responsibility, utilization of peers, and a sense of mutuality;
- allowing supervisees to establish goals which will be meaningful and relevant for them,
- providing peers as models.

In addition, peer supervision can benefit colleges and universities by encouraging ongoing professional development and self-assessment by student development staff. Structured, regular consultation with colleagues can not only assist in the development of new skills, viewpoints, and options for working effectively with students, but can also provide the support and resources necessary to help prevent professional burnout. Finally, through peer supervision experiences, student affairs practitioners can assist one another to identify, confront, and resolving ethical issues and conflicts on college and university campuses.

Summary

While peer supervision is not likely to replace traditional supervision approaches, a review of relevant literature suggests that it may provide

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

important opportunities and experiences that can augment the effectiveness of student development professionals. In addition, because it is often difficult for practioners to receive the amount and quality of supervision they desire, peer supervision offers an alternative approach for counselors to work together with chosen colleagues in a supervisory relationship. Clearly, peer supervision has the potential to contribute to the supervisory process and is an approach which deserves greater attention, investigation, and application in college and university environments.

REFERENCES

American College Personnel Association (1989). A statement of ethical principles and standards of the American College Personnel Association. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (1989). Curriculum guide for supervisor training. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (1990). Draft ethical standards for counseling supervisors. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Benshoff, J.M. (1989). The effects of the Structured Peer Supervision Model on overall supervised counseling effectiveness ratings of advanced counselors in training. Dissertation Abstracts International, 49, 11A. (University Microfilms No. 89-02828).

Buchheimer, A. (1964). Group procedures in supervision. Paper presented at the American Personnel and Guidance Associaiton Convention, San Francisco, CA.

Buchheimer, A. (1966, December). Approaches to practicum supervision in counselor training. Paper presented before the New York Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, New York, NY.

Cross, D.G., & Brown, D. (1983). Counselor supervision as a function of trainee experience: Analysis of specific behaviors. Counselor Education and Supervision, 22, 333-341.

Corey, G., Corey, M.S., & Callanan, P. (1988). Issues and ethics in the helping professions (3rd edition). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (1987). Accreditation procedures manual and application for counseling and related educational programs. CACREP: Alexandria, VA.

Davis, K.L., & Arvey, H.H. (1978). Dual supervision: A model for counseling and supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 17, 293-99.

Fraleigh, P.W., & Buchheimer, A. (1969). The use of peer groups in practicum supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 8, 284-288.

Friesen, D.D., & Dunning, G.B. (1973). Peer evaluation and practicum supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 12, 229-235.

Hansen, J.C., Robins, T.H., & Grimes, J. (1982). Review of research on practicum supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 22, 15-24.

Hess, A.K. (Ed.) (1980). Psychotherapy supervision: Theory, research, and practice. New York: Wiley.

Hogan, R.A. (1964). Issues and approaches in supervision. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice, 1, 1739-1741.

Hollis, J.W., & Wantz, R.A. (1986). Counselor preparation 1986-89: Programs, personnel, trends (6th edition). Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development, Inc.

Holloway, E.L., & Hosford, R.E. (1983). Towards developing a prescriptive technology of counselor supervision. Counseling Psychologist, 11, 73-77.

Houts, D.C. (1980). Consultation teams: A supervisory alternatives. Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry, 3, 9-19.

Johnston, J.A., & Gysbers, N.C. (1967). Essential characteristics of a supervisory relationship in counseling practicum. Counselor Education and Supervision, 6, 335-340.

Leddick, G.R., & Bernard, J.M. (1980). A history of supervision: A critical review. Counselor Education and Supervision, 19, 186-196.

Leddick, G.R., & Borders, L.D. (1987). Handbook of counselor supervision. Alexandria, VA: American Association for Counseling and Development.

Littrell, J.M., Lee-Borden, N., & Lorenz, J.R. (1979). A developmental framework for counseling supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 19, 129-136.

McBride, M.C., & Martin, G. E. (1986). Dual-focus supervision: A non-apprenticeship approach. Counselor Education and Supervision, 25, 175-182.

Meyer, R.J., Jr. (1978). Using self-supervision to maintain counseling skills: A review. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 57, 95-98.

Remley, T.P., Jr., Benshoff, J.M., & Mowbray, C. (1987). A proposed model for peer supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 27, 53-60.

Reynolds, E., & McWhirter, J.J. (1984). Cotherapy from the trainee's standpoint: Suggestions for supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 23, 205-213.

Runkel, T., & Hackney, H. (1982). Counselor peer supervision: A model and challenge. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 61, 113-115.

Ryan, T.A. (1978). A general model for counselor supervision. In T.A. Ryan (Ed.), Systems models for counselor supervision (pp. 7-16). Washington, DC: APGA.

Seligman, L. (1978). The relationship of facilitative functioning to effective peer supervision. Counselor Education and Supervision, 17, 254-260.

Spice, C.G., Jr., & Spice, W.H. (1976). A triadic method of supervision in the training of counselors and counseling supervisors. Counselor Education and Supervision, 15, 251-280.

Spicuzza, F.J., & DeVoe, M.W. (1982). Burnout in the helping professions: Mutual aid groups as self-help. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 61, 95-98.

Spooner, S.S., & Stone, S.C. (1977). Maintenance of specific counseling skills over time. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 24, 66-71.

Stoltenberg, C. (1981). Approaching supervision from a developmental perspective: The counselor complexity model. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28, 59-65.

Wagner, C.A., & Smith, J.P., Jr. (1979). Peer supervision: Toward more effective training. Counselor Education and Supervision, 18, 288-293.

Worthington, E.L., Jr. (1984). Empirical investigation of supervision of counselors as they gain experience. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 31, 63-75.

Yager, G.G., & Park, W.D. (1986). Counselor self-supervision. Journal of Counseling and Human Service Professions, 1, 6-17.